

however, have the right and the obligation to teach clearly and fully the objective truth about the dignity and rights of the human person. These teachings, in turn, must inform the consciences of voters. "By its intervention in this area, the Church's Magisterium does not wish to exercise political power or eliminate the freedom of opinion of Catholics regarding contingent questions. Instead, it intends—as is its proper function—to instruct and illuminate the consciences of the faithful, particularly those involved in political life, so that their actions may always serve the integral promotion of the human person and the common good."

Dear friends in Christ, I exhort you with all my heart to take courage and proclaim the Gospel of Life to those who will stand for elected office this fall. It is by your prayers and by your votes that politicians who are unconditionally pro-life and pro-family will serve our country. Conversely, if our voices remain silent or if, God forbid, we vote contrary to our informed consciences, we will see our country led down a short path to ruin. We want freedom for all, but there can be no freedom without truth. In the words of our Holy Father: "When freedom is detached from objective truth it becomes impossible to establish personal rights on a firm rational basis; and the ground is laid for society to be at the mercy of the unrestrained will of individuals or the oppressive totalitarianism of public authority."

Let us all pray for those politicians who claim to be Catholic yet continue to oppose the law of God and the rights of persons that, by the grace of God, they will be converted once again to the full and authentic articulation and practice of the faith.

Finally, I wish to affirm my brother bishops who have proclaimed the truth of these critical matters and who have admonished those Catholic politicians who place themselves at odds with the truth of God. May that truth which is the foundation of genuine freedom prevail in our country.

Given at the Chancery on this first day of May 2004, the Feast of St. Joseph the Worker.

Most Reverend MICHAEL J. SHERIDAN,  
*Bishop of Colorado Springs.*

#### MANIPULATION OF ENERGY MARKET

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. DEFAZIO) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Speaker, 3 years ago, with a bipartisan group of lawmakers, I met with Vice President CHENEY to discuss the then crisis and run-up of electricity prices in the western United States. On a bipartisan basis, Republicans and Democrats, we told the Vice President that we believed the market was being manipulated by Enron and others, and he lectured us and told us that we were out to lunch, that this was nothing but market forces and, in fact, if we did not build a 500 megawatt electric generating plant every week for the next 16 years, prices would stay up at \$2,000 or \$3,000 a megawatt hour.

Now, of course, the transcripts are now out there from the Enron traders. I cannot read them on the floor because they are absolutely chock full of obscenities, but they carry on about a few things. They carry on about how

great it is going to be when the Bush administration goes to the White House, no more price caps; how Ken Lay was the greatest single contributor to George Bush over his political lifetime and might even be Secretary of Energy, or otherwise would be setting energy policy for the United States.

One has to wonder why Vice President CHENEY is still hiding the records of those conversations. Then, as they manipulated the market on 450 out of 573 days, one day they were on the phone yelling, cheering, "burn, baby, burn" as power lines were scorched by fire. They bragged about stealing millions from Grandma Millie in California.

□ 1800

They talked about withholding power, increasing prices, wandering power through Oregon and other neighboring States in order to jack up prices in California, and still today people in my State are paying about 43 percent more for their electricity than they did 4 years ago for the same electrons generated by the same plants because of these scams by Enron, scams that of course Vice President CHENEY said were nothing but market forces.

Now the Republicans are refusing to do anything about it. This energy bill does nothing to deal with what Enron has done to defraud the people of the western United States and roll back these illegal and unfair contracts and prices.

But now we are on to a new one, oil. Now, this is kind of familiar. DICK CHENEY and George Bush say it is market forces, nothing we can do about it. In fact, the White House has done nothing about the escalating oil prices here in the United States.

Now, it is kind of interesting because it is awfully similar to the electricity industry. There have been 2,600 mergers in the petroleum industry in the last decade. There are virtually no more small independent distributors, and many of the smaller companies have been gobbled up by others. Tremendous concentration in this industry.

Of course the same thing that follows with these market forces is an absolutely obscene runup in profits. We are seeing just in the first quarter this year British Petroleum 165 percent increase in profits. ChevronTexaco, 294 percent increase in profits. ConocoPhillips, a measly 44 percent. Their market forces are not working as well as the others, I guess. And Exxon-Mobil, 125 percent, and this next quarter promises to be even more lucrative for these companies.

Now, there was a day when the United States Congress set an independent path on critical issues to the American people, like the oil crises of the 1970s, and the Congress actually took definitive steps. They enacted windfall profit tax to get at the price gouging of the industry. They adopted

mandatory fuel economy standards. They in fact capped the price of fuel, because they knew that this was being manipulated and the American people were being gouged.

But not this Congress. This Congress is offering the same old lame energy bill that it passed 3 years ago, 2 years ago, last year, and now we are going to vote on it again, same bill, \$18 billion of subsidies to the suffering oil-gas industry that has record profits, profits of over \$700 billion last year, and the taxpayers should subsidize it. Oh, come on now. I guess that is market forces. No. Wait a minute. How can subsidizing the industry be market forces? Well, I guess it is socialism, but we do not count that as socialism because we are giving it to a meritorious industry that needs the money; or, well, it does not need the money but it should get the money.

Now, what is going on here? When are we going to begin acting on behalf of the American people? When is the Bush administration going to file their complaint in their favorite organization, the World Trade Organization? They love rules-based trade. They love the WTO, but guess what? Eight of the OPEC countries are in the WTO. They are violating the rules of the WTO by constricting supply to drive up prices; but the Bush administration, no, they are not going to file a complaint against OPEC.

Then of course there is the Petroleum Reserve, which the President is filling at outrageous prices, and the list goes on and on. I have offered productive alternatives, as have other Democrats, but this administration stands mute because their friends in the oil industry are making out like bandits.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey). Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. HENSARLING addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Kansas (Mr. TIAHRT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. TIAHRT addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. TERRY addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

#### ABUSE OF POWER BY SECRETARY RUMSFELD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr.